



February 15,2005

Mr. Todd Cormier, P.E. HKM Engineering Box 31318 Billings, MT 59101

Dear Mr. Cormier:

Thank you for your presentation to the Directors of the Billings Rod and Gun Club regarding proposed "Beltway Loop" corridors.

We have the following comments on the various routes shown on the handout you presented to our Directors:

- -The route shown in yellow would completely transect our Club property making almost all of our ranges unusable. It would also place a major traffic-way downrange of our bigbore rifle range. We find this option to be totally infeasible
- The route shown in blue-gray would be in the shotfall area of several of our shotgun ranges as well as an archery practice range. It would also prevent any future expansion of any of our shotgun ranges and interfere with our current agricultural operation. We find this option to be totally infeasible.
- -Any route to the east of our property would interfere with our options for changing or moving ranges, or improving wildlife habitat. For our purposes we believe the routes to the west of our property would be most suitable.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Please keep us informed as the process continues.

Sincerely,

Brian Stein, President

CC: Dave Mumford

Billings City County Planning Office

DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND CONSERVATION



BRIAN SCHWEITZER, GOVERNOR

SOUTHERN LAND OFFICE

STATE OF MONTAIN

PHONE: (406) 247-4400 FAX: (406) 247-4410

HKM L...

AIRPORT INDUSTRIAL PARK 1371 RIMTOP DRIVE BILLINGS, MONTANA 59105-1978

13 May 2005

Todd Cormier, PE HKM Engineering, Inc. P.O. Box 31318 Billings, MT 59107-1318

Dear Mr. Cormier:

This letter is written to follow-up on our meeting on Monday, 9 May 2005 where we discussed the proposed Inner Belt Loop road, northwest of Billings, which would connect Wicks Lane with Zimmerman Trail/Highway 3. In our meeting we discussed the various alignments/corridors that have been studied to date by HKM and where they would cross State Trust land that the Southern Land Office manages.

We are supportive of the efforts by HKM and the Billings-Yellowstone County Planning Department to study this area of northwest Billings and produce a document that will help guide the location of future roadway locations as properties are developed or monies become available for the City or County to acquire right-of-way and construct the roadway.

As we stated in our meeting, the Southern Land Office is most supportive of the alignment that would traverse State lands in Sections 18, 14 and 22. All of these sections are landlocked, but near developing areas of Billings and as infrastructure becomes available to them, they have a high potential to be developed in ways that will increase the revenue to the beneficiaries of these lands versus the current grazing leases. The Trust beneficiary of these three sections is Common Schools. Where any Trust land adjoins properties that are being developed at urban densities with City services, DNRC will explore developing Trust land with similar uses.

Again, if you have questions on the Inner Belt Loop project or other State Trust land use issues, please feel free to contact us at 247-4400 and thank you for the opportunity to meet with you and discuss this project.

Cordially,

Sharon Moore Area Manager

Sharon Moore

Jeff Bollman, AICP Area Planner



http://www.billingsgazette.com/index.php?display=rednews/2004/11/12/build/heights/25-loop.inc

Heights connection to Highway 3 to be studied

By DIANE COCHRAN Of The Gazette Staff

After languishing on the city's long-term transportation plan for more than two decades, a project to connect the Heights to Highway 3 took a step forward last week.

HKM Engineering Inc. inked a deal with the City-County Planning Department to perform an eight-month feasibility study on the connection project, dubbed the inner belt loop.

"We're going to be looking at identifying a corridor," said Todd Cormier, project manager with HKM. "We'll be gathering all the information. It's like holding your thumb out at arm's length and squinting with one eye."

As envisioned for years, the inner belt loop would connect the West Heights - possibly at Wicks Lane or Alkali Creek Road - to Highway 3. The connector road probably would hook up with the highway near Zimmerman Trail.

"With the pressure of new subdivisions and traffic, we felt it was time to motivate ourselves to get busy with a feasibility study," said Scott Walker, a transportation planner with the City-County Planning Department. "What we want to have at the end of this study is a little bit firmer line on the map."

Walker likened the existing idea of the inner belt loop to a dotted line on a map.

"What we're doing is getting the nuts and bolts of that," he said.

HKM will examine the area between the two connection points, looking for any reason why a road could not be built there. Reasons could be environmental, such as the presence of an endangered species like an eagle, or historical, such as the presence of tepee rings or other relics.

The consulting firm will also work with landowners along the proposed route and seek community input through a public meeting.

Its report will probably include more than one option for the inner belt loop and will include costs.

The study will provide "a big, thick marker line on the map," Cormier said. "Somewhere along this path, we'd like to see a corridor in the future."

A road will not necessarily be built as soon as the corridor is identified. Instead, a defined corridor will help guide building in the area. Developers behind new construction will build the road as the community grows along the corridor.

"As development continues to expand out there, developers can work with the Planning Department" based on the corridor, Cormier said.

Diane Cochran may be reached at 657-1287 or dcochran@billingsgazette.com.



http://www.billingsgazette.com/index.php?display=rednews/2005/01/14/build/heights/25-problems.inc

Meeting looks for ways to fix Heights problems

By DIANE COCHRAN

Of The Gazette Staff

OK, Heights residents, listen up: It's time to quit complaining and start fixing.

That's the attitude the Heights Neighborhood Plan Steering Committee wants people to bring to its public meeting at 6:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Castle Rock Middle School library.

"We all know what the issues are," said committee chairwoman Jolene Rieck. "My hope is to get solutions to the issues."

Committee member Chuck Strum said the meeting will be a chance to check the public barometer on the issues that the group has been studying.

"The people of the Heights have got opinions," Strum said. "We're really looking to figure out what they want it (the Heights) to look like. What do they want it to be when it grows up? It's almost like parenting a neighborhood."

Strum hopes the meeting will spark constructive comments from people with Heights ties who have not served on the committee. Committee members are dedicated and knowledgeable, but they don't know everything, he said.

"We need the eyes and ears of people who live up there to clue us in," Strum said.

Committee members will staff nine stations at Tuesday's meeting - one for each of nine issues the group identified as in need of definition or development in the Heights.

"People can go to their specific interest areas and discuss their interests individually rather than have the whole meeting dominated by a transportation discussion," Rieck said.

Station subjects will be transportation, land use, public safety, parks and recreation, infrastructure, schools, economic development, housing and community facilities.

Committee members investigated those issues over the past few months and should be well-versed in each topic.

The group identified the focus topics early in the planning process and conducted a survey of people with Heights ties based on those issues.

Although there were no huge surprises in the survey results, Rieck said that it was a valuable tool in confirming that all types of Heights residents seem to agree about what is important to their neighborhood.

The majority of respondents said they want the Heights to be a balanced community with a mix of amenities and they desire a combination of commercial and residential growth.

Most said that public utilities and medical services are adequate in the Heights but that services for senior citizens and children are not. Sixty-five percent said they would use a branch library and a community center in the Heights.

Forty-eight percent said they do most of their shopping in the Heights, while 88 percent said there are too few entertainment and restaurant options.

Of six road-construction projects, respondents labeled three as having a high priority - the Bench Boulevard connection (hooking Bench to Sixth Avenue North), the inner belt loop (connecting Wicks Lane and Highway 3) and the northeast bypass (hooking Main Street to Interstate 90).

Three other projects - the Aronson Avenue extension (to Alkali Creek Road), the north bypass (Main Street to Highway 3) and the Annandale Road and Sierra Grande Boulevard extensions (providing alternate access to Skyview High) - were deemed less critical.

The steering committee is charged with taking its survey results and comments from Tuesday's meeting and identifying goals for the Heights. Then members will write a step-by-step plan to accomplish each goal.

Diane Cochran may be reached at 657-1287 or dcochran@billingsgazette.com.

http://www.billingsgazette.com/printer.php?display=rednews/2005/01/14/stories/heights/25-problems



City of Billings Online

"The Magic City"







O Home

O Working

O Living

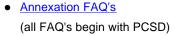
O Visiting

O Government

O Online Services

Planning & Community Services Department

- Building Division
- Code Enforcement Division
- Community Development Division
- Meet the Planning Division Staff
- Planning Advisory Boards



- Billings Bypass EIS Project
- Forms, Handouts and applications
- Long Range & Transportation Planning
- Northwest Shiloh Plan
- Northwest Shiloh Plan Chip Exercise Map
- Northwest Shiloh Plan Infrastructure Map
- Shiloh Vicinity Map
- Shiloh Area Map
- Shiloh Project Description
- Shiloh Public Workshop Information
- Shiloh Road Corridor Project
- South Shiloh Corridor Overlay District-Ordinance 05-5314
- 2005 Traffic Count Map



View Calendar For the Planning Dept.

Current News and Events

Inner Belt Loop Public Informational Meeting-- A public informational meeting on the proposed Inner Belt Loop will be held on Wednesday, June 29th at 7:00 PM at the Castlerock Middle School. HKM Engineers of Billings is conducting the study for the Planning Department to select a preferred corridor alignment for the roadway proposed to connect Alkali Creek Road to Highway 3 near Zimmerman Trail. The purpose of the meeting is to present information on the alternatives being studied and to seek public input. For further information, please contact Scott Walker, Transportation Planner, 247-8661.

Planning Home
Annexation Policy
Building Division
Code Enforcement
Community Development
Current Land Use
Long Range Planning
Neighborhood Planning
Planning Advisory Board

Search

S

Quick Links

- Administrative Services
- Animal Shelter
- City Clerk
- City Council
- Community Services
- Fire Department
- Logan Intl. Airport
- MET Transit
- Parks/Rec/Public Lands
- Parmly Billings Library
- Planning & Building
- Police Department
- Public Works

The Planning Division provides community planning and development services to Yellowstone County, the City of Billings, and the Town of Broadview. The staff also supports the Yellowstone County Board of Planning, as well as the City and County Zoning Commissions and Boards of Adjustment. Originally established under the supervision of the Board of County Commissioners in 1984, the Department changed administrations in 1995 and is currently under the general supervision of the City of Billings.

The Department's responsibilities are broad based and consist of current planning, long range planning, and transportation planning. While performing these duties, an emphasis is continually placed on customer service and community involvement.

The staff of nine planners, four code enforcement officers and an alternative modes coordinator strives to recognize the public needs respond in a timely and courteous manner. On a daily basis, our

planners review and process building permit, subdivision, and zoning applications, as well as annexation petitions. Each code enforcement officer monitors City and County land use and investigates zoning complaints and other code violations.

All planners perform multiple duties to ensure customers receive accurate and immediate service. One of the major responsibilities of the Division is to administer the Unified Zoning Regulations for the City of Billings and Yellowstone County's zoning jurisdiction, as well as Special Zoning Districts 12, 14, 15, 16, and 17. As staff to City and County Zoning Commission and Boards of Adjustment, the Department is required to review zoning applications and prepare recommendations for Special Reviews, Zone Changes and Variances.

The County Planning Board reviews City and County subdivision applications and forwards their recommendations to the governing bodies. It is the responsibility of staff to ensure that subdivision applications comply with local regulations and state law, before presenting recommendations to the Planning Board. Staff also reviews all applications for compliance with the 2003 Growth Policy, the 2000 Transportation Plan and the Heritage Trail Plan. Each planner assigned to a subdivision application coordinates the review of proposed subdivisions with other City and County departments. After departmental review, the Planning Department then forwards all subdivision applications to the Yellowstone County Board of Planning and the governing bodies for final action.

Long-range planning is important to maintain a high level of public service and quality of life. The Planning and Community Services Department is constantly assessing public needs and identifying community issues either during the development of a planning document like the Yellowstone County and City of Billings 2003 Growth Policy or Heritage Trails plans, or by attending neighborhood planning meetings and public hearings. Most of the planners are involved in long-range planning, but the Neighborhood Planner has the primary responsibility of developing neighborhood and townsite plans.

The Yellowstone County Planning Board, as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization, is charged with the responsibility for transportation planning for the Billings Urban Area. The transportation planner is responsible for developing the Unified Planning Work Program each year. The UPWP contains a discussion of transportation project to undertake during the upcoming program year and information on funding staffing and project scheduling. In addition, the transportation planner compiles and maintains traffic volume and accident statistics. Along with the Alternative Modes Coordinator, the transportation planner coordinated the completion and adoption of The Heritage Trials Plan, an updated bicycle plan for the Billings Urban Area. The Alternative Modes Coordinator is responsible for the implementing The Heritage Trail Plan. The position is funded by the Federal Highway Administration.



Contact Us | Accessibility Policy | Disclaimer | Privacy Policy | Feedback

 $@ \ City \ of \ Billings \ \underline{Site \ Developed \ By \ Ideal \ Computer \ Concepts}$





http://www.billingsgazette.com/index.php?display=rednews/2005/06/24/build/heights/20-meeting.inc

Meeting focuses on connecting Heights, West End

By DIANE COCHRAN

Of The Gazette Staff

Engineers have identified eight potential routes for an inner belt loop road between the west Heights and Highway 3.

The routes, their variations and their feasibility will be presented at a public meeting at 7 p.m. Wednesday in the Castle Rock Middle School library.

"We're going to try to select, with the public's help, the best corridor," said Scott Walker, a transportation planner with the City-County Planning Department. "This is another piece of the puzzle that will help traffic flow in the Heights."

The planning department and HKM Engineering Inc. have been working for several months to identify paths that the inner belt loop could follow to connect the Heights to the West End.

The potential corridors being considered are not as specific as road alignments. Instead, they show general areas where a road could be built.

In some options, the belt loop begins at Wicks Lane, and, in some, it hooks up to Alkali Creek Road. In another variation, the loop connects to both. At its other end, the road empties out on Highway 3, where it could connect to Zimmerman Trail

Todd Cormier, project manager with HKM, said most of the options have drawbacks. HKM researched each one's feasibility based on topography, historical sites and landowner comments.

Some routes are less desirable because they pass too close to the airport or the Billings Rod & Gun Club. Others cross nearly unnavigable canyons or potentially valuable archaeological sites.

The city's job - with public comment - is to select the best one. Once a preferred corridor is identified, it will be used to guide development.

"It will be up to local government to determine how high a priority that road becomes," Walker said.

At present, the city does not have plans to begin construction on the inner belt loop.

But, Cormier said, it is important to define where the road should go before Billings expands into the area it would pass through.

"Back in the day, nobody planned," Cormier said. "Planning was something big cities did, not cities in Montana."

Many road-construction projects in the works for the Heights, such as an underpass to connect Bench Boulevard to Sixth Avenue North, have been developed to address problems created by a lack of planning.

Diane Cochran may be reached at 657-1287 or dcochran@billingsgazette.com.

If you go

HKM Engineering Inc. and the City-County Planning Department will present potential routes for an inner belt loop connecting the Heights to the West End at 7 p.m. Wednesday in the Castle Rock Middle School library.



http://www.billingsgazette.com/index.php?display=rednews/2005/06/27/build/local/90-local-guide.inc

Local guide

Monday, June 27, 2005

Local events

• CITY COUNCIL 6:30 p.m., City Hall

Potential loop routes shown Wednesday

HKM Engineering Inc. and the City-County Planning Department will present potential routes for an inner belt loop road connecting the Heights to the West End at 7 p.m. Wednesday in the Castle Rock Middle School library.

Routes under consideration include connections between Wicks Lane and Highway 3 or Alkali Creek Road and Highway 3.

Traffic detoured for installation of mains

COP Construction LLC will be installing water and sewer mains along Rimrock Road from 62nd Street West to 70th Street West. Traffic will be detoured around the work zone from Tuesday through Aug. 16.

Ice skating lessons offered

The City Recreation Department and Centennial Ice Arena are teaming up to offer ice skating lessons, starting today. Classes are from 1:45 to 2:45 p.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, with the first session running through July 8.

Other upcoming sessions will be from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. July 11-22, and from 2 to 3 p.m. Aug. 1-12.

The cost is \$53 for early registration and \$63 for late registration. Non-city residents pay an additional \$10.

This program is offered for skaters from age 3 and up who desire to learn basic ice skating skills. Students will be grouped according to their age and ability during the first class and will advance through various levels as their skills improve. Bike or hockey safety helmets are required for beginners.

For more information, call 657-8371.

Summerfest drawing near

The 24th annual Summerfest family festival and barbecue will be July 19 on the lawn at Montana State University-Billings.

The event is open from 4:30 to 8 p.m. and features free inflatable games and toys for both adults and children, along with free balloons, face painting, a dunking booth, box and bounce, SeaWeed the Sea Monster, obstacle course, big slide, sumo, quarterback toss, volleyball and Joust. Free cotton candy and snowcones will be available.

Bucky Beaver Ground Grippers will provide music.

The only cost at Summerfest is the barbecue, which is \$7 for ages 11 and older, \$3.50 for ages 10 and under and \$6.50 for MSU-B employees and students. For information, call 657-2365.



Billings Heights Community Development Task Force



Denis A. Pitman - Chair

Community Development 510 North Broadway Billings, MT 59101

Http://ci.billings.mt.us/government/cs/Taskforce/Heights.htm

Denis Pitman 1730 Bitterroot Drive Billings MT 59105 DPitman1@aol.com 406-254-0166

Agenda

June 28, 2005 7:00PM Castlerock Middle School Library

- 1. WELCOME!!! Call the meeting to order / Pledge of Allegiance
- 2. Introductions of Residents and Guests
- 3. Approval of past minutes
- 4. Guest Speaker: Dave Mumford, Public Works Department
- 5. Guest Speaker: Todd Cormier, Inner belt loop presentation *
- 6. Committee Reports
 - a. Police Report Sergeant Mark Kirkpatrick
 - b. Alternate Route Committee Bruce Larson
 - c. Code Enforcement Don Vegge
 - d. City Zoning Commission Angela Cimmino
 - e. City Council Update Larry Brewster and Dave Brown
 - f. Heights Neighborhood Plan Steering Report Jolene Rieck
 - g. Parks and Recreation Board Denis Pitman
 - h. Membership Enhancement Angela Cimmino
- 7. Old Business
- 8. New Business
- 9. Public Comment
- 10. Adjournment

Next meeting: Tuesday July 26, 2005 @ 7:00PM

Important Dates:

*June 29, 2005 Castle Rock Middle School 7:00PM Inner Belt loop meeting planning study. Contact Todd Cormier 869-6338



http://www.billingsgazette.com/index.php?display=rednews/2005/07/01/build/heights/30-projects.inc

Many street projects in works

By DIANE COCHRAN Of The Gazette Staff

In the next five years, \$24 million in public-works projects will unfold in the Heights.

"It's about time, maybe, in some people's minds," said Dave Mumford, director of the city Public Works Department. "It's going to be a lot of improvements."

Mumford outlined some of them during the Heights Task Force meeting on Tuesday.

First up is Alkali Creek Road, which will be resurfaced from Senators Boulevard to Black Pine Street starting this year. Water, sewer and storm-water systems and curbs, gutters and sidewalks will also be installed along parts of the road.

The first portion of the project - between Black Pine and the Holiday station - is set to begin next week, Mumford said. Three crews will work all summer on the project, which will continue next summer.

Also on the list for the next five years:

- Bench Boulevard, which will be extended to connect with Sixth Avenue North. The project is in the final design phase, and construction is slated to begin in 2008. The intersection of Bench and Sixth will include a grade separation or underpass and Bench will be expanded to four lanes up to Hilltop Road.
- Airport Road, where construction is scheduled for 2007. Intersections at North 27th Street and Alkali Creek Road will be redesigned, and the road will be widened to four lanes.
- Lake Elmo Drive from Main Street to Hansen Lane will be resurfaced next spring. Crews will address irrigation problems this fall.
- Wicks Lane and Governors Boulevard will get a traffic signal this fall.
- Aronson Avenue is in the design study phase. Eventually Aronson will extend to Alkali Creek Road near its intersection with Airport Road. The project is on the city's Capital Improve-ment Plan in 2010.

"It's going to be busy," Mumford said, referring to the full slate of Heights projects. "It's going to be real nice when it's done."

The task force also heard on Tuesday about the inner belt loop, another road project in the future for the Heights.

Todd Cormier of HKM En-gineering Inc. presented a series of possible corridors for the so-called belt loop, which would connect the Heights to the West End.

Five options are being considered. Each follows a slightly different path from Highway 3 - at about Zimmerman Trail - to Alkali Creek Road or Wicks Lane.

"All have positives and negatives," Cormier said.

The corridors come with estimated price tags of \$13.3 million to \$15.6 million. The City Council is expected to approve one of them, but a road probably will not be built for many years.

A corridor merely establishes where the city would like a road to be built as development occurs in a certain area. The inner belt loop probably will not be built until the city expands into the area that the road traverses.

Diane Cochran may be reached at 657-1287 or dcochran@billingsgazette.com.

Inner Belt Loop Connection Planning Study Public Informational Meeting – Heights Task Force June 28, 2005

Comment Form
(Please Print)

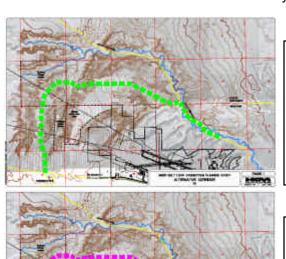
HKM Engineering Inc Inner Belt Loop Connection PO Box 31318

Please indicate your name & address (optional), and either leave this form at the meeting, or mail to:

Billings, MT 59107-1318

Comments should be received by July 9, 2005

Inner Belt Loop Connection Planning Study - Corridor Comment Sheet – Please indicate your preference for each corridor from less preferable (1) to very preferable (10), and provide comments in the boxes adjacent to the corridors. Additional comments my be written on the front of this form. Thank you. (Please Print)



Corridor 1A - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Corridor 1B - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Corridor 2A - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Corridor 2B - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10



Corridor 3 - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Inner Belt Loop Connection Planning Study Public Informational Meeting June 29, 2005

Comment	Form
(Please Pr	int)

Please indicate your name & address (optional), and either leave this form at the meeting, or mail to:
ricase indicate your name a address (optional), and either leave this form at the meeting, of mail to.

HKM Engineering Inc Inner Belt Loop Connection PO Box 31318 Billings, MT 59107-1318 Inner Belt Loop Connection Planning Study - Corridor Comment Sheet - Please indicate your preference for each corridor from less preferable (1) to very preferable (10), and provide comments in the boxes adjacent to the corridors. Additional comments my be written on the front of this form. Thank you. (Please Print) Corridor 1A - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Corridor 1B - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Corridor 2A - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Corridor 2B - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Corridor 3 - 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10